

**WATCH WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY ON PARISH WEB SITE
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Dear Friends,

We have been tossed about by many trials lately, haven't we? The coronavirus challenges that have literally threatened our lives, and the subsequent economic hardships unexpectedly has shaken households, and currently the national protests around all matters of racial injustice. These storms have thrown us into some new places, cast us upon new shores. We are in new emotional lands and new spiritual territories, maybe where we have never been before.

One of the invisible storms is uncertainty. Generally, we are planners fidgeting with our calendars about meetings, conferences, play dates and those much-desired vacations. And the current state of our global health pandemic has thrown such planning into the wind. It is nearly impossible to plan short-term, 3-4 months ahead, even for the Thanksgiving holiday, let alone, Christmastide.

And too, we are not very good at waiting for the clarity we need, for the schedule we want, for the check we are expecting, for the Amazon package to arrive, and in these days for Peapod to finally come with our groceries.

Our scriptures are stories about others who patiently waited on God to settle them and protect them, even in the storm. The lessons offer the reminder that as long as we try to be faithful or kind, God will show up and show us a handle that will save us, maybe only temporarily, from the abyss that is right around the corner.

Our God, in our busy, cluttered world, we long to see your face, to hear simple words of love and healing, to find a quiet place in your arms, to be touched by your grace, to be heard without yelling. And so, we pray: keep our minds on you that we may know your peace, open our eyes to your love that we may see your beauty, and quiet our hearts that we may hear your voice. Amen. (Let Us Pray, Israel Galindo, p. 74).

Faithfully, Beverly+

The Collect for Sunday

O Lord, make us have perpetual love and reverence for your holy Name, for you never fail to help and govern those whom you have set upon the sure foundation of your lovingkindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Lessons: Psalm 86:1-10,16-17, Jeremiah 20:7-13, Romans 6:1b-11, Matthew 10:24-39

GOD ALONE IS ENOUGH

Let nothing disturb you,
Let nothing make you afraid,
All things are passing,
God never changes.
Patience obtains all things.
Nothing is lacking to the one who has God--
God alone is enough.

These words, from a meditation titled "St. Teresa's bookmark," are a fine summary of today's readings from Scripture. They all speak to us, strangely enough, about the gift of patience. We are taught that patience is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but it often feels like a heavy burden. People in today's society mistake patience for submission in the same way they mistake kindness for weakness -- and they walk all over you. But as usual, we must look beyond the surface. God has a greater message in store.

Some truly great people in the history of Christianity have been "walked on" in this way, you see. Just as one example, St. Teresa, known as Teresa of Avila, is world famous as a theologian, reformer of the Carmelite Order, and spiritual advisor to the great medieval Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross. But Teresa's ministry was not well received in the community that she loved.

Her sisters had grown lax in faith and practice, she called for reform, and their response was to throw her out of convents that she herself had established. On one occasion, she was turned out at night in the middle of a rainstorm. Dressed from head to toe in her coarse wool habit, she got back into her donkey cart and was

riding along when the wheel of the cart hit a ditch and the cart turned over, dumping Teresa into the mud. She sat there, in mud-soaked wool, looked up to heaven, and said, "Lord, if this is the way you treat your friends, it's no wonder that you don't have many." A musing that we still use today.

But frustrated as she was, Teresa clung to God." Teresa not only taught this lesson, she lived by it. She did not give up on God, even when her sisters fought her every step of the way, going to priests and bishops to make trouble for her

Today, the very same saint who was treated so cruelly is known as a Doctor of the Church -- an exemplary teacher and thinker -- while the nuns who treated her so badly are long dead and unknown to us. And the Carmelite convents of Teresa's Reform continue to outnumber those of the unreformed group to this very day.

You see, Teresa understood what the prophets were talking about and what Jesus was teaching in today's Gospel lesson. It's a lesson you could put in very simple words. She said: "Sometimes, when things go wrong, you just have to sit back -- and tap your foot." This is what Teresa did, and it's at the heart of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Our Lord Christ Jesus.

He endured persecution wordlessly and embodied the triumph of God over evil while waiting upon God. This Christian example is not a sitting back that does nothing. It is not passive submission; it is active waiting that is grounded in ultimate faith in the righteousness of God. Neither is it surrender to the belief that nothing can be done about the wrong; it is understanding that it is God who makes things right.

So, yes, we must be patient because the God we serve is patient. But the patience of God is a mysterious thing that comes in mysterious ways. We do not know how long it will last. We do not know how the solution will come when God steps in to make things right.

The God of the Scripture is a God of miracles--and they happen in our day, too. Martin Luther King taught that "right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant" and the whole world continues to benefit from his legacy of patient but active faith.

Two months before he died, Martin Luther King, Jr. preached these words from an Atlanta church just down the street, Ebenezer Baptist Church. The sermon was titled, "The Drum Major Instinct." He concluded by speculating about his own

funeral, and his own life. "If you want to be on the right hand or the left hand of Jesus," he said, "you serve. You serve. It's the only way in."

And then he said, "If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. I'd like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to give his life serving others."

So, we do not strike back in the darkness of our own anger and impatience and arrogance. We do not take the problem into our own hands, tempting God by "flying out in front" with our own solutions.

Instead, we turn to God with the truth in our hearts, in the Spirit of the Psalmist. No matter what anyone may choose to do to us, we are all called to love justice, do mercy, and walk humbly before our God-and when we do not, the consequences when we don't can be an awful thing to behold.

So, when troubles come, do just what you know is right and pray for protection. Then sit back, tap your foot, and watch God bring deliverance. Teresa's words are a message of ultimate triumph: "God alone is enough."